

Message Text

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SUBJECT: WILLIAM SAFIRE COLUMN

THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF WILLIAM SAFIRE'S COLUMN TITLED
"READING ARBATOV'S MIND" WHICH APPEARED IN THE NEW YORK
TIMES OF THURSDAY, APRIL 13.

BEGIN TEXT.

WASHINGTON, APRIL 12 - AT THE SOVIET-AMERICAN SUMMIT OF 1972
GEORGI ARBATOV-NOW THE KREMLIN'S LEADING AMERICANOLOGIST--
WROTE SOME OF THE TOASTS FOR THE RUSSIANS, AND I WROTE SOME
OF THE TOASTS FOR THE AMERICANS. HERE IS WHAT I IMAGINE IS
GOING THROUGH GEORGI'S HEAD RIGHT NOW:

IT IS WELL KNOWN, A POWER STRUGGLE IS TAKING PLACE FOR THE
FOREIGN POLICY SOUL OF PRESIDENT CARTER. THAT EXPLAINS THE
VACILLATION AND CONFUSION FROM WASHINGTON.

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MY ANALYSIS IS THAT TWO FACTIONS ARE CONTENDING, USING TYPI-
CALLY AMERICAN LIGHTHEARTED LABELS: THE "WOODY WOODPECKER
FACTION," LED BY ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI AND A FEW DIEHARD COLD
WARRIORS WHO OBJECT TO THE LEGITIMATE EXPANSION OF SOVIET
POWER, VERSUS THE "MR. SOFTEE FACTION," OSTENSIBLY LED BY

SECRETARY VANCE AND PAUL WARNKE BUT MASTERMINDED BY PROF.

MARSHALL SHULMAN, MY COUNTERPART AS CHIEF SOVIETOLOGIST.

THE FACTIONS CLASHED FIRST OVER THE "TOUGH" SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT AT WAKE FOREST LAST MONTH WHICH WOODPECKER INSISTED WAS A "DEFENSE SPEECH" AND WOULD NOT SUBMIT FOR CLEARANCE TO SOFTEE AT STATE.

AFTER MR. CARTER DELIVERED THAT SPEECH AND BEFORE WE HAD A CHANCE TO DENOUNCE IT, SOFTEE CALLED MINISTER/COUNSELOR BESSMERTNYKH AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON TO SAY HE HOPED THE ENTIRE TEXT WOULD BE TRANSMITTED AND NOT JUST THE HARD-LINE PARTS. WE KNEW HE WAS SIGNALING THAT THE SPEECH HAD BEEN MEANT FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION ONLY, AND SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY AS AN EXPRESSION OF FOREIGN POLICY. AN AMAZING CALL, AND APPROVED IN ADVANCE BY MR. VANCE.

A "MEMCON" OF THAT EVIDENCE OF A SPLIT IN THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION IS NOW DOING THE ROUNDS OF THE U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT. I HATE TO THINK WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF I CALLED THE U.S. EMBASSY IN MOSCOW TO HINT THAT A BREZHNEV SPEECH DID NOT MEAN WHAT IT SAID.

THE SECOND CLASH OF FACTIONS THAT LEADS ME TO BELIEVE THE CONFUSION IS GENUINE TOOK PLACE ABROAD AIR FORCE ONE AFTER THE CARTER TRIP TO AFRICA. IT CONCERNED THE NEUTRON BOMB, WHICH COULD HELP STOP THE IMMEDIATE CONQUEST OF EUROPE BY UNCLASSIFIED

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SOVIET TANKS, AND IS THUS NOT IN THE SPIRIT OF DETENTE.

I KNEW THAT MR. CARTER WOULD NOT PRODUCE THAT WEAPON EVER SINCE LATE FEBRUARY, WHEN THE U.S. SUDDENLY CANCELED A NATO MEETING. BUT MR. CARTER'S RESPONSE TO OUR HIGH-POWERED PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN--AND EVIDENCE OF THE FACTIO'AL SPLIT --CAME IN THE "SECRET" CABLE SENT BY THE MR. SOFTEE FACTION TO AIR FORCE ONE WHILE MR. CARTER WAS IN AFRICA. IT SUGGESTED A LETTER BE SENT TO MR. BREZHNEV SAYING:

"I HAVE DECIDED THAT THE U.S. WILL NOT PROCEED WITH PRODUCTION OF THE REDUCED-BLAST ENHANCED-RADIATION WARHEAD. A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT TO THIS EFFECT WILL BE MADE SHORTLY. (SILLY OF THE WHITE HOUSE TO PRETEND LATER THAT THE DECISION HAD NOT BEEN MADE.) I BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT TO FOSTER A GENERAL CLIMATE PROPITIOUS TO ARMS CONTROL AND CONDUCTIVE TO MUTUAL RESTRAINT."

THE DRAFT LETTER URGED BY THE MR. SOFTEE FACTION CONTINUED: "THE DECISION WAS TAKEN BY ME PERSONALLY... FRANKLY, IT WAS MADE MORE DIFFICULT BY A PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN WHICH SPREAD FUNDAMENTAL MISCONCEPTIONS CONCERNING THE NATURE OF

AND POTENTIAL ROLE OF THE ERW. (BUT IT WORKED.) MY
DECISION WAS FURTHER COMPLICATED BY DISTURBING MILITARY
TRENDS IN EUROPE, PARTICULARLY THE LARGE AND CONSTANTLY
IMPROVING SOVIET OFFENSIVE CAPABILITY."

THE LINEUP OF THE FACTIONS ON SENDING THAT LETTER FOLLOWED:
"N.S.C. HAS NOT SEEN THE TEXT AND HAS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE
WISDOM OF THE IDEA. GELB ALSO HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE
NEED FOR SUCH A COMMUNICATION. SHULMAN THINKS IT NEEDS
TO BE SENT."

THE LETTER TO BREZHNEV WAS NEVER SENT, OF COURSE, BECAUSE
BOTH FACTIONS KNEW ABOUT THE DRAFT. THE ONLY ACTIONS
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TAKEN ARE WHEN ONE FACTION MOVES BY ITSELF -- AS IN THE
HARD-LINE WAKE FOREST SPEECH BY THE WOODPECKERS, OR THE
DON'T-GET-US-WRONG CALL TO OUR EMBASSY BY THE SOFTEES.

HOW THEN, CAN WE IN THE KREMLIN EXPLOIT THIS DISARRAY?
HOW CAN WE HELP THE SOFTEES TRIUMPH OVER THE WOODPECKERS
IN THE BATTLE FOR CATER'S MIND? THE ANSWER: SOVIET
FIRMNESS. INSTEAD OF DISCOURAGING THE SOFTEES, IT GOADS
THEM TO GREATER CONCESSIONS. THEY CANCELED THE B-1
BOMBER, LIMITED THEIR CRUISE MISSILES, AND WE HELD FIRM;
AS A RESULT, THEY CANCELED THEIR NEUTRON BOMB.

NEXT WEEK, WHEN MR. VANCE AND MR. WARNKE COME TO MOSCOW,
WE WILL WELCOME THEM AS LEADERS OF THE SOFTEE FACTION AND
SEE WHAT THEY WILL DO FOR US LATELY. I WILL KEEP AN EYE
ON REGINALD BARTHOLOMEW, THE WOODPECKER SPY PLANTED IN THE
U.S. GROUP.

WE ARE AT A CROSSROADS OF DETENTE. AS I TOLD THE AMERICAN
SPEECHWRITER AT THE '72 SUMMIT, I CAN HEAR THE FOOTSTEPS
OF HISTORY. IF WE CAN RESTRAIN THE WOODPECKERS AND SEDUCE
THE SOFTEES, WE WILL MAKE MR. CARTER THE BEST U.S.
PRESIDENT THE SOVIET UNION HAS EVER HAD. END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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